

Class Title: Postpartum – Healthy Lifestyle

Class Topic: After You Deliver-Health Tips for Moms

Class Sub-Topic: Returning to your pre-pregnancy weight

Class Counseling Points/Facilitated Group Discussion Questions:

1. Why is it important to focus on fruits, vegetables and whole grains?
2. Why should junk food be kept out of the house?
3. How should you manage portions and meal patterns?
4. What can you do if you're not hungry, but you want to snack?
5. Can you describe some guidelines for exercising after giving birth?
6. Tell me what you think about how fast or slow you lose weight?

1. Why is it important to focus on fruits, vegetables and whole grains?

- **Focus on fruits, vegetables and whole grains.** Foods high in fiber, such as fruits, vegetables and whole grains provide you with many important nutrients **while helping you feel full longer.** Other nutrient-rich choices include low-fat dairy products, such as skim milk, yogurt and low-fat cheeses. White meat poultry, most fish, beans, and lean cuts of beef and pork are good sources of protein, as well as zinc, iron and B vitamins.

2. Why should junk food be kept out of the house?

- **Avoid temptation.** Surround yourself with foods that are good for you. If junk food causes too much temptation, keep it out of the house.

3. How should you manage portions and meal patterns?

- **Eat smaller portions.** Don't skip meals or limit your intake of fruits and vegetables. You'll miss important nutrients. Instead, scale back your portions of higher calorie foods.

4. What can you do if you're not hungry, but you want to snack?

- **Eat only when you're hungry.** If you're anxious or nervous or if you simply think it's time to eat, distract yourself. Take your baby for a walk, call a friend or read a favorite magazine.

5. Can you describe some guidelines for exercising after giving birth?

When your doctor gives you the OK most women can start exercise before 6 weeks after delivery starting with walking and working up to more intense activities. These factors can vary starting time.

- Difficulty of the pregnancy and delivery
- Where you active before and during pregnancy
- Vaginal delivery or C-section (Longer Recovery Time)
- **Get comfortable.** If you're breast-feeding, feed your baby right before you exercise. Wear a supportive bra and comfortable clothing.
- **Start slowly.** Begin with light aerobic activity, such as walking, stationary cycling or swimming. Avoid jumping and jerky, bouncy or jarring motions.
- **Break it up.** Exercise in short sessions throughout the day. As your stamina improves, slowly increase the length and intensity of your workouts.
- **Include your baby.** Take your baby for a daily walk in a stroller or baby carrier. If you prefer to jog, use a jogging stroller designed for infants (Can't jog with babies until 6 months of age-adequate head control needed). Lay your baby next to you while you stretch on the floor. Hold him or her in your arms and dance to your favorite music.
- **Target your abs.** Losing abdominal fat takes dietary changes and aerobic exercise, but abdominal crunches and other ab exercises can help tone your abdominal muscles.
- **Remember your Kegels.** These exercises won't help you lose weight, but they will tone your pelvic floor muscles. Simply tighten your pelvic muscles as if you're stopping your stream of urine. Try it for five seconds at a time, four or five times in a row. You can do Kegels while standing, sitting or lying down — even while breast-feeding your baby.
- **Hydrate:** Remember to drink plenty of water before, during and after each workout. Stop exercising right away if you have pain, dizziness, blurred vision, shortness of breath or a sudden increase in vaginal bleeding. These may be signs that you're overdoing it. Best to call your doctor for advice.

6. Tell me what you think about how fast or slow you lose weight?

- Most women lose about 10 pounds during birth, including the weight of the baby, placenta and amniotic fluid. During the first week after delivery, you'll lose additional weight as you shed retained fluids.
- The fat stored during pregnancy won't disappear on its own.
- Through diet and exercise, it's normal to lose about half a pound a week.
- Slow weight loss is best. If you lose weight too quickly you could regain it back
- It may take six months or even longer to return to your pre-pregnancy weight — whether you're breast-feeding or not.
- While breastfeeding you are burning calories which in turn helps to better maintain weight.
- In the meantime, take pride in your healthy lifestyle and your role as a mother.

Lesson Assessment
Please complete and Return to the WIC Nutritionist

1. Was this lesson easy to understand?

___Yes ___No

2. Was this lesson helpful to you?

___Yes ___No

3. Would you change anything about this lesson?

___Yes ___No

4. Did this lesson teach you something new?

___Yes ___No

5. What additional information do you need?

Resource for lesson:

Information taken from the Mayo Clinic Web site

Additional resources:

<http://health.utah.gov/rhp>

<http://www.babyourbaby.org/>

<http://www.checkyourhealth.org/>

<http://health.utah.gov/medicaid/>

<http://health.utah.gov/cfhs/>

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Utah WIC Program